

regon's south coast — we're talking Coos Bay, North Bend and Charleston — provides a great holiday getaway for the hardy, with a range of activities from wet weather hiking to candy treats, a holiday light fest like no other, and serious knee-slappin' live cornball entertainment.

Here's the plan for your two-and-a-half-day adventure. **Before you go:** Book yourself a room for two nights. Our favorite place to stay is the Mill Casino in North Bend, just north of Coos Bay. You don't need to gamble to enjoy a weekend here. The Mill is clean and modern and has a good restaurant right on the property. Service has always been excellent. Ask for a tower room; they're newer and have the best view. Then book yourself seats for a show for the second night of your trip at Little Theatre on the Bay (See Day 2, below) and pack the car. Be sure to bring the Gore-Tex and hiking shoes.

#### DAY

**9 am:** Head down I-5 for the three-hour leisurely drive to Coos Bay. You'll go west from the freeway on Highway 38, one of Oregon's most quietly scenic byways, through Drain and Elkton to Reedsport. Along the way you can stop for a full-on breakfast at **Arlene's** in Elkton, or just grab a cup of caffeine at the kiosk in town. A few miles before you hit Reedsport, stop at the **Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area** on the south edge of Highway 38 for clean public restrooms and, usually, a view of the semi-tame elk herd lounging in the meadow right next to the road. They're impressive animals, especially if you've never seen one up close. Good photography stop for the wildlife enthusiast.

Just before you hit North Bend and Coos Bay you'll cross the spectacular **Conde McCullough Memorial Bridge**, an Art Deco wonder built in 1936 and named for its designer, an Oregon Department of Transportation engineer who created an entire series of graceful bridges on Highway 101 and elsewhere.

When you reach downtown Coos Bay, stop for lunch. One of our favorite meals is Mexican food at the **Puerto Vallarta**, 230 S. Second Street, a big, friendly, family-oriented place on the main drag downtown. Another good possibility is **SharkBite's Seafood Cafe, Market & Theater** nearby at 240 S. Broadway, which offers good seafood and sandwich fare with a surfer-dude ambience.

After lunch, drive west on the well-marked road that leads from downtown Coos Bay to Charleston, being sure to stop in at **Cranberry Sweets & More**, 1005 Newmark Avenue, where you and any children in your party can eat yourselves absolutely sick on delicious free samples of candy while watching the candy makers at work through plate-glass windows. Best tackled after a healthy lunch.







At Charleston, keep driving another 13 miles to Shore Acres State Park. Pay the \$5 entry fee, pull in and park in the big paved lot, but DO NOT go into the formal garden — yet. That's your reward for finishing the hike that awaits, about two-and-a-quarter miles of easy coastal trail down to Cape Arago, with its loud and smelly sea lions lounging on offshore rocks.

**2 pm:** Start hiking. You brought your Gore-Tex, right? The four-and-a-half-mile loop trail wanders south along the coast just behind the fenced-off formal garden and heads past the gorgeous Simpson Cove and onwards. You may get rained on, and this time of year can be chilly, so dress warm and dry and keep everyone moving.

Once you've reached Cape Arago, enjoy the windy view, take a few photos, have a snack and, if pressed for time, return the way you came — or, if you're more ambitious, take the scenic loop route back to Shore Acres by heading up the unmarked logging road above the parking lot and working your way along the ridge. This maintained but informal trail can be steep and slippery and a little hard to find in places; as you approach Shore Acres on the return, it takes you past the concrete remains of a World War

II coast-watching installation. If you get back with daylight to spare, head north along the coast — past the remains of the old Simpson tennis courts (who could play tennis in this kind of wind?) — for another, much shorter loop trail of less than a mile and back to the garden.

**5 pm:** Assuming you've timed this right (I hope you brought flashlights on the hike in case you didn't) you should be back at Shore Acres just as it gets dark — the perfect moment to tour the spectacular formal garden, which is lit up from Thanksgiving until New Year's by tens of thousands of Christmas lights. The garden, laid out in the style of Versailles, is all that remains of the timberbaronial estate of Louis J. Simpson, who enjoyed life in a mansion overlooking the ocean before it burned down in a mysterious fire on July 4, 1921. The grounds fell on hard times until the state, which bought the property in 1942, began restoring the garden in the 1970s.

**7 pm:** By now you should be plenty hungry for dinner. Head back to Coos Bay to the Blue Heron Bistro, which serves classic German cuisine — and yes, they have German beer — at 100 Commercial Avenue in downtown before retiring to your room at The Mill for the night.



#### DAY 2

**Sleep in this morning** and then enjoy breakfast at The Mill's Plank House restaurant, which offers solid Northwest fare and a view of the Coos River. Next drive to downtown Coos Bay and park in one of the free public lots along the waterfront, where you can see an ocean-going tug on display next to a pleasant boardwalk and paved path about a mile long for strolling between the railroad tracks and the water. Next divert yourself for an hour or so at the Coos Art Museum, which is housed in the beautiful old Art Deco post office building at 235 Anderson Avenue. Big by small-town standards, the museum has maritime and Northwestern art. While downtown check out the Egyptian Theatre, 229 S. Broadway, a restored Egyptian-revival 1925-vintage vaudeville house that now shows movies and offers occasional concerts on its massive — and original — Wurlitzer theater pipe organ.

For a late lunch/early dinner, head back toward Shore Acres, but this time stop in Charleston, which is perhaps Oregon's most-authentic fishing village. It's wrapped around a U.S. Coast Guard station and heliport but also supports a small commercial fleet, whose skippers and sailors can be found — along with some decent seafood — at a handful of small restaurants and bars within a block of the water. Wander around and enjoy the scenery before picking a place to eat. One of the best choices is **The Portside**, 63383 Kingfisher Road, where you can dine and then hang out with a book and a drink or a cup of tea and watch the fishing boats come and go until it's time to drive back to North Bend for...

7 pm: Showtime at the Liberty Theatre, 2100 Sherman Avenue, North Bend. The Little Theatre on the Bay, an amateur theater group that is resident at the Liberty, puts on a delightfully cornball Christmas show each year modeled on the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville and using local talent. This year's version is called *Opry Home for the Holidays* and runs Dec. 1 through 3; tickets and more info at thelibertytheatre.org.

#### DAY 3

**Sleep in again.** This is, after all, a holiday. Check out of your room. Then grab breakfast at the Pancake Mill Restaurant, 2390 Tremont Street, North Bend, which is right across Highway 101 from The Mill Casino. Enjoy sweet, syrupy carbs and hot coffee galore. Expect a short wait for a table on weekends.

**11 am:** Finally, get in the car and head back to Eugene the way you came, not forgetting to stop and say hello again to the elk at Dean Creek along the way. You'll be home by 1 pm, fully refreshed.

## HOLIDAY market

November 17th & 18th

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# A Christmas with (Almost) No Carol

HOLIDAY SEASON MEANS A RETURN OF OLD FAVORITES By Rick Levin

ut you were always a good man of business, Jacob," faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.

"Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The deals of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"

This, of course, is a passage from *A Christmas Carol*. Along with, perhaps, filmmaker Frank Capra's transformative classic, *It's a Wonderful Life*, Dickens' classic novella of redemption has become such a holiday staple that most folks couldn't give a curdled eggnog if they ever saw it again. A sentimentalist at heart, this makes me sad — I mean, we are a nation ruled by Scrooges, now more than ever — but I understand.

Apparently, so do the folks who stock our Eugene stages; this year, the only *Carol* you'll find is the return production of **Ballet Fantastique's** *An American Christmas Carol*, which refashions Dickens' story as a World War II fable full of dance

and song, including local jazz chanteuse Halie Loren performing classics by Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald and Nat King Cole. See the ballet Dec. 15-17 at the Hult Center; info and tickets at hultcenter.org.

And, if it's warm and fuzzy familiarity you crave this winter season, fret not, stocking stuffers! We will always have *The Nutcracker*, performed by **Eugene Ballet Company**, Dec. 22-24, also at the Hult.

And now for something a little different: Support Centro Latino Americano's good works Dec. 2 by attending **Wayward Lamb's "Christmas Show and Toy Drive"**— a fabulous diva show and fundraiser hosted by local legends Daphne Storm and Diva Simone Slaughter. The show starts at 7 pm (doors at 6 pm), is 21-and-up and costs a mere \$10.

**Oregon Contemporary Theatre** embraces a similar spirit of sassy fun with "America's Favorite Dragapella Beautyshop Quartet," **The Kinsey Sicks**, an off-Broadway troupe that will perform its latest show, *Things You Shouldn't Say!* for four performances only, Nov. 30-Dec. 2; tickets at octheatre. org or 541-465-1506. Be warned, they say: "If you love Don-

ald Trump, you'll hate this show!"

Over in the "Grove" at **Cottage Theatre** you can unhitch the Grinch in your giddyup with *Seussical*, a musical celebration of all things Theodor Geisel, narrated by The Cat in The Hat and featuring Horton the Elephant, running Dec. 1-23; info and tickets at cottagetheatre.org or 541-942-8001. At **Very Little Theatre's Stage Left**, dig into a production of *The Christmas Foundling*, a yuletide heartstring-tugger about an orphaned boy raised by miners, set on Christmas Eve, 1850, during California's Gold Rush.

Our local children's theater, **Upstart Crow**, offers a musical presentation of *The Polar Express*, a newfound holiday classic about a boy's magic train ride to the North Pole, running Dec. 8-10 and 15-17 at the company's Crow's Nest Theatre; info and tickets at upstartcrowstudio.org or 541-688-8260.

And for a different breed of live performance, watch the talented folks at **Radio Redux** put on a staged reading of *The Shop Around the Corner*, Ernst Lubitsch's legendary 1940 romantic comedy starring Jimmy Stewart and Margaret Sullivan (and the inspiration for *You've Got Mail*), running Dec. 8-10 at the Hult; tickets at hultcenter.org.

If festive movement is your thing, Lane Community College's dance department presents **Identity Dance Company**, "**What Christmas Means to Me**," Dec. 15-16 at Ragozzino Performance Hall on campus; tickets and info at lanecc.edu. And Dec. 17 at the Hult, **Eugene Symphony** presents *Cirque de la Symphonique Holiday Spectacular*, a show promising "astonishing feats of acrobatic wizardry on — and above — the stage," and featuring seasonal classics from the orchestra, including music from *The Nutcracker*.

And, remember, always keep your eye on *EW*'s weekly What's Happening calendar for further seasonal events and shows that might pop up between now and the New Year. ■





## Tis the Season to Listen

FROM NEW AGE SYNTH ROCK TO SERIOUS COMIC OPERA, THERE'S HOLIDAY MUSIC AROUND TOWN FOR EVERY TASTE By Bob Keefer



othing ignites the holiday spirit like music — and you can find plenty of festive music happening around town between now and the start of the New Year. Music is a big part of Light Up

**Downtown**, the city's third-annual public lighting ceremony, which runs from 5:15 to 6:30 pm Friday, Nov. 17, at the West Park Blocks. Check out everyone from Mayor Lucy Vinis to the UO Duck and Eugene's Slug Queen Santa Frida Elisa Refugio Babosita at a festive event that includes music by Eugene Concert Choir, Ridgeline Ukulele Extravaganza and the Sheldon High School Dublinaires. The fun continues downtown on Friday evenings in December, FREE.

You'll hear a progressive New Age holiday sound at the celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the Mannheim **Steamroller Christmas** album at the Hult Center, 7:30 pm Sunday, Nov. 26, when Chip Davis and the 'rollers bring

that sound alive, complete with multimedia effects. Tickets \$35 and up at hultcenter.org.

For a traditional performance from a long-time Eugene choral group, check out The Eugene Gleemen's Christmas Holiday Concert at 7:30 pm Saturday, Dec. 2, at Central Presbyterian Church, 555 E. 15th Avenue; and at 2:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 3, at Wildish Theater, 630 Main Street, Springfield. Tickets are \$15, \$12 student and seniors, at the door or at eugenegleemen.org for the Saturday show or wildishtheater.com for Sunday.

For an oompahing good time, check out the Oregon Tuba Association's Tuba Carol Christmas at noon Sunday, Dec. 3, at Two Rivers/Dos Rios Elementary School at 10th and G streets in Springfield. FREE.

Jazz it up at The Shedd in December when the Jazz Kings offer An Old-Fashioned Christmas in two performances 7:30 pm Wednesday, Dec. 6, and 3 pm Sunday, Dec. 10. The program, with vocals by Shirley Andress, Bill Hulings and others, includes American Songbook

standards such as "I'll Be Home For Christmas," "White Christmas" and "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas." Tickets are \$24-\$34 at the shedd.org.

The concert will be repeated 7:30 pm Tuesday, Dec. 12, at the LaSells Stewart Center in Corvallis and 7:30 pm Wednesday, Dec. 13, at the Florence Events Center in Florence. See theshedd.org for tickets.

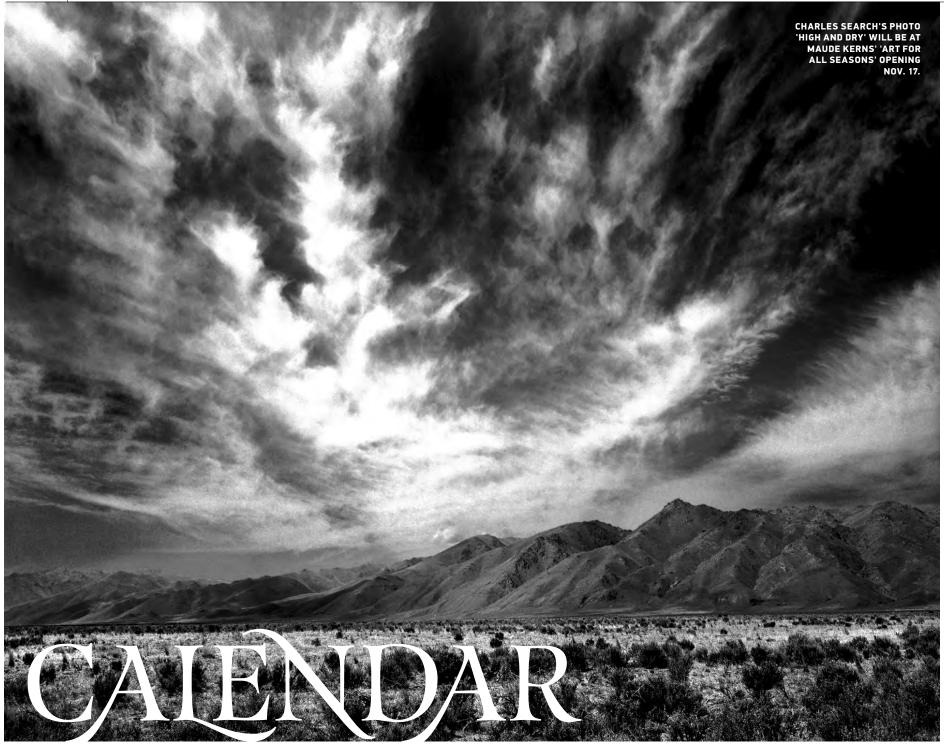
Finally, no holiday season would be complete in Eugene without the annual New Year's Eve Eugene Opera performance at the Hult Center. This year the opera is, yet again, back from the dead, having survived its latest operatic brush with insolvency.

To open its new season of two shows it's putting on Gioachino Rossini's crowd-pleasing comedy *The Barber* of Seville with baritone Jake Gardner, bass-baritone Malcolm MacKenzie, soprano Heather Johnson and tenor Javier Abreu. Performances are 2:30 pm Saturday, Dec. 30, and 7:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 31. Tickets are \$20 to \$79 (\$15 for students) at eugeneopera.com. ■









#### FRIDAY, NOV. 17

Maude Kerns Art Center presents "Art for All Seasons" show and Club Mud ceramics sale through Dec. 15, opening reception 6-8 pm Friday, Nov. 17, 1910 E. 15th Ave. FREE.

#### SATURDAY, NOV. 18

Greeting card extravaganza with original holiday cards by local artists. Noon to 5:30 pm, reception with refreshments at 1 pm, Karin Clarke Gallery, 760 Willamette St. FREE.

Holiday Photography Market, with photos for sale by Bob Keefer, Katsuyuki Shibata and Mark and Vicki Gotchall, 10 am to 5 pm at Don Dexter's dental office, 2233 Willamette Street, Suite R FRFF

#### SUNDAY, NOV. 26

Mannheim Steamroller Christmas by Chip Davis, 7:30 pm at the Hult Center's Silva Concert Hall. \$35 and up, 682-5000 or HultCenter.org.

#### FRIDAY, DEC. 1

Wreath Festival & Auction, 5-9 pm at Oregon Wine Lab, 488 Lincoln St. Continues through Dec. 20.

Faye Nakamura 37th annual Holiday Studio Sale, noon-6 pm Friday, Dec. 1, and 10 am to 5 pm Saturday Dec. 2, at 2695 University Street.

Thimbleberry Felt Designs Gallery, 2630 Agate St., holds a holiday sale of work by Tylar Merrill, Lybi Thomas and Sabrina Mauer from 4 pm to 8 pm today and 11 am to 5 pm Saturday, Dec. 2 and 9. 541-521-8701. FREE.

Seussical, a musical celebration of all things Theodor Geisel, narrated by The Cat in The Hat, opens 8 pm today at Cottage Theatre in Cottage Grove and runs 8 pm Thursdays through Saturdays and 2:30 pm Sundays through Dec. 23; info and tickets at CottageTheatre.org or 541-942-8001.

The Christmas Foundling, 7:30 pm today and Thursdays-Saturdays and 2 pm Sundays through Dec. 10, The Very Little Theatre, 2350 Hilyard Street, 344-7751. Tickets at TheVLT.

#### SATURDAY, DEC. 2

Hannah Goldrich (jewelry) and Mike Pease (drawings, paintings, notecards, calendars) will host their annual holiday show and sale from 11 am to 4 pm at 768 West 10th Avenue. 541-521-5123. Free. Eugene Gleemen Christmas Holiday Concert, 7:30pm at Central Presbyterian Church, 555 East 15th Ave. \$15,

\$12 student and senior, at EugeneGleemen.org

Victorian Family Holiday at Shelton McMurphey Johnson House, family craft day, storytelling and holiday fun, 11 am-2 pm today, 303 Willamette St., 484-0808, smjhouse.org. FREE.

Saturday Market Holiday Market and Holiday Farmers Market, hundreds of booths with winter produce, handcrafted gifts, international food court and live music, 10 am to 5 pm weekends until Dec. 23 and 10 am to 4 pm Dec. 24, Lane Events Center Performance Hall and Exhibit Hall. FREE.

Wayward Lamb's Christmas Show and Toy Drive — diva show and fundraiser hosted by Daphne Storm and Diva Simone Slaughter. 150 W. Broadway. Doors 6 pm, show 7 pm; \$10, 21 and older

The 2nd and Blair Artists will have their annual Studio Sale and Open House from 5 to 9 pm today and noon to 4 pm Sunday, Dec. 3 at the studios at 2nd Avenue and Blair Boulevard. Artists include Alison Shiboski, Chris Paulson, Betsy Wolfston, etchings by Michael DiBitetto. A reception, with silent auction, will be 4 to 7 pm today.

#### SUNDAY, DEC. 3

Eugene Gleemen Christmas Holiday Concert, 2:30pm at Wildish Community Theater, 630 Main Street, Springfield. \$15, \$12 student and senior, at WildishTheater.com or at the door.

#### TUESDAY, DEC. 4

Shasta Middle School 28th Annual Winter Concert, 7pm, Hult Center. \$10.50 -\$13.

#### THURSDAY, DEC. 7

Shelton McMurphey Johnson House Candlelight Tour, 6 pm today & Dec. 14 & 21, Shelton McMurphey Johnson House, 303 Willamette Street, 484-0808, smjhouse.org. \$6 adults; \$5 seniors, students, AAA members.

Eugene Symphony presents Handel's Messiah at 7:30 pm in the Hult Center's Silva Concert Hall. Tickets \$32 to \$71.50 at EugeneSymphony.org.

#### FRIDAY, DEC. 8

Faith Rahill's Holiday Pottery Sale, 5 to 8 pm today; 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, Dec. 9; and 11 am to 4 pm Sunday, Dec. 10. 2581 Monroe Street. 541-344-2100. FREE.

The Polar Express, performed by the young thespians of Upstart Crow, today through Dec. 10 at Crow's Nest Theatre, 855 W.



1st Avenue. Tickets \$12 at the door or upstartcrowstudios.org.

Radio Redux's *The Shop Around the Corner*, live radio drama, 7:30 pm today & Dec. 9, 2 pm Sunday, Dec. 10, Hult Center, 682-5000. \$25.

Holiday Boutique, 10 am to 4 pm today and Saturday, Dec. 9, at The Patrician's Community Room, 3350 E. Game Farm Road, Springfield.

#### SATURDAY, DEC. 9

A Holiday Show On Ice - A Night At The Movies! Eugene Figure Skating Club showcases local talents skating to your favorite movie music. This is a benefit for the Relief Nursery. Admission is one new, unwrapped book for ages 6 and under.

The Eugene Downtown Lions Club's 10th annual Pancake Breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus is 8 am to noon at St. Thomas Episcopal Fellowship Hall, 1465 Coburg Road. \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids, 3 and under eat free.

Victorian Christmas Open House at Heceta Lighthouse Bed and Breakfast, north of Florence on Highway 101. Doors will be open at the historic lighthouse keeper's house from 4 pm to 7 pm today and Dec. 10 and 16-17. FREE, but parking at the state park costs \$5.

#### SUNDAY, DEC. 10

Eugene Concert Choir's Make We Merry show with traditional and contemporary holiday songs; concert 2:30 pm in the Hult Center, with pre-concert festivities kicking off at 1:30 pm in the Hult Center lobby. \$28.50 to \$59, EugeneConcertChoir.org.

Cascade Chorus Christmas Show, 2:30 pm  $\,$ 

Sheldon High School Auditorium. Tickets \$12 and \$15 at CascadeChorus.org and 541-607-6937.

#### THURSDAY, DEC. 14

Candlelight Baroque concert featuring the Oregon Mozart Players, 7:30 pm today, Friday, Dec. 15, and Saturday, Dec. 17, at First Christian Church, 1166 Oak St., 345-6648. \$15-\$45, \$10 students and youth.

#### FRIDAY, DEC. 15

Ballet Fantastique's An American Christmas Carol opens today at 7:30 pm, runs at 7:30 pm Saturday, 12/16 and 2:30 pm Sunday, 12/17, at the Hult Center's Soreng Theater. Tickets \$35-\$76 at Hult Center.org.

Live nativity scene 7 pm to 9 pm today through Dec. 17 at Friendly St. Church of God, 2290 Friendly St. FREE.

#### SUNDAY, DEC. 17

Eugene Symphony's *Cirque de la Symphonique Holiday Spectacular*, 2:30 pm at the Hult Center's Silva Concert Hall. Tickets \$22.50 to \$71.50 at Eugene Symphony. org.

#### FRIDAY, DEC. 22

The Nutcracker presented by Eugene Ballet Company, 7:30 pm today, 2 pm and 7:30 pm Dec. 23, 2 pm Dec. 24. Hult Center. Tickets \$33-\$66, college and youth discounts available.

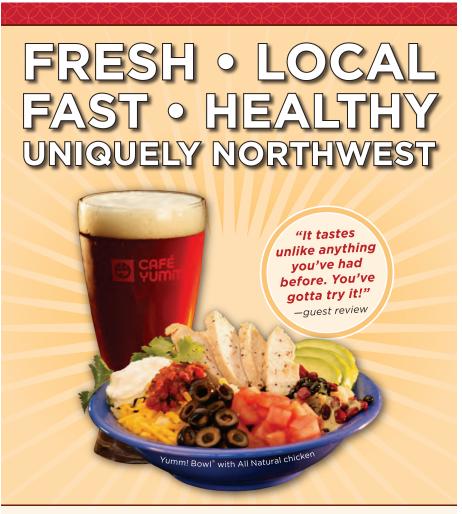
#### SATURDAY, DEC. 30

Eugene Opera presents *The Barber of Seville,* 2:30 pm today & 7:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 31, Hult Center. \$20-\$79.











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